

This documents was submitted by Mary Aschenbrener on February 10, 2011 in support of her position related to the 1913 Craftsman style house located at 553 Woodward Boulevard in the Michillinda Park Community.

## MICHILLINDA PARK

The Michillinda Park community was established in 1912. Bordered by Rosemead Blvd., Huntington Drive, Michillinda Ave. and Oakdale Street, large individual lots with architecturally diverse, modest homes characterize our neighborhood. With the backdrop of the San Gabriel Mountains, hundreds of mature trees enhance the beauty of the area. Deodars grace the center parkways of both Woodward and Michigan Boulevards providing a popular walking route for all residents. The presence of redwoods, oaks, avocados, palms, magnolias, a variety of fruit and flowering trees make our community an oasis from urban living. Gardens are found on most of the lots and provide ample evidence that this area is a gardeners' paradise. The homeowners of Michillinda Park are committed to preserving this quality of life for themselves and for future generations.



This California Craftsman, completed in 1913, is 1 ½ story “airplane bungalow” of approximately 2,156 square feet with a concrete foundation, shake exterior, gable roof with 3 foot eaves, double hung windows and brick trim. The cement front porch measures 9 x 24 feet. On the first floor there is a living room with a fireplace, dining room, den with built in book shelves and window seat, one full bathroom with an original 1912 claw foot tub, a half bath, kitchen and hardwood floors. There are two additional bedrooms on the second floor. A rear second floor bathroom was added in 1937 approximately 10 x 11 feet. In 2003 a new detached garage measuring 20 x 24 feet was built.

**The current owner has given us until January 20, 2011 to find a buyer. After that she has threatened to bulldoze the property.**



Because our neighborhood was developed in the early 1900's our traditional modest homes sit on large lots. Because we have no protection from preservation ordinances and despite our attempt to protect our neighborhood through the Community Standards which we amended in 2002 - construction that is totally incompatible with the architectural heritage of our neighborhood. threatens the character of Michillinda Park.

New “big box” houses, their accompanying gated fronts and cemented front yards (serving as parking lots for 3 or 4 cars) bring their massiveness all the way to the front sidewalk. They are not compatible with the traditional homes in our neighborhood. In residential community design, ***“Compatibility means having an architectural style, visual bulk, massiveness, height, width and length which is***

*compatible with the neighborhood and which harmonizes with the existing residential structures in the neighborhood.*” The bulk, massiveness, height width and length of the big box houses is **not** compatible with the historical character of the Michillinda Park neighborhood. In place of gardens and open walkways, new construction takes on the look of individually gated communities complete with security fences, automatic gates and digital access keypads. The cumulative impact of houses of such scale is having an adverse impact on our community and changing the character of our neighborhood.



## EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE CRAFTSMAN AND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

**Sept. 29, 2010:** Two neighbors meet with Susy Nemer, Senior Deputy, District Office for Supervisor Michael Antonovich, (Fifth District) and Mr. Paul Novak, Senior Deputy, Supervisor Antonovich's Office. . . said there was nothing they, or we, could do to save the Craftsman. Only option was to begin process of amending the Community Standards - which takes at least a year. Said she would have Mr. Mitch Glazer, Supervising Regional Planner, Countywide Studies, call me to begin meetings to amend standards.

**November 1, 2010:** email to Kristina Rowe, planner reviewing architectural drawings for new construction at 553 Woodward. She said there was nothing we or she could do.

**November 10, 2010:** Meeting with Mitch Glazer, ten neighbors attend. Discuss procedure for amending Community Standards. Neighbors express concern for immediate way to protect Craftsman, ask about effectiveness of requesting an urgency ordinance.

**November 15, 2010:** Receive examples of urgency ordinances from Mitch Glazer

Decide to request an environmental assessment not an urgency ordinance

**November 17, 2010:** Send Letter to Supervisor Antonovich requesting environmental assessment.

**November 19, 2010:** Call to Antonovich's Office - tell me they have no letter

**November 20, 2010:** Call Antonovich's Office provide US Post Office information about who signed for letter. Transfer me to intern who says he knows nothing. Referred back to receptionist. Tell me they found letter they will get back to me.

**November 21, 2010:** Call from Antonovich's office saying I will receive two calls, one from Paul Novak, one from Rich Bruckner, Director of Planning

**November 23, 2010:** Receive calls, told that there is nothing they or we can do.

**November 29, 2010:** Email Paul Novak asking him to confirm my recollection of our phone

conversation so I can accurately report back to neighbors of our phone conversation. Never receive reply from Novak

**December 13, 2010:** Write letter to architect for new construction at 553 Woodward requesting meeting with owner

**December 15, 2010:** Receive call from owner of 553 Woodward saying she will meet with us on Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:00pm.

**December 17, 2010:** Call California Preservation Foundation in San Francisco asking for help. Speak to Jennifer Gates, says she will contact LA Conservancy and have them call me. Alphonso Vavalla of LA Conservancy calls.

**December 19, 2010:** 18 neighbors meet with owner inside the Craftsman express dismay and anger at the proposed demolition of the Craftsman and proposed new construction. After about 20 minutes the owner surprises us when she says, "You find me a buyer and I'll sell the property and build somewhere else." I gave her the name of the Broker who recently sold 482 Woodward to a person committed to restoring the home. Everyone left, thanking her.

**December 20, 2010:** Broker calls owner. . Owner says broker has until Jan. 20,2011 to find buyer. . broker already knows of interested potential buyers.

**December 22, 2010:** LA Conservancy asks for write up and photos of Craftsman House. They will post our efforts on their Facebook page. Send photos and write up of Craftsman and Michillinda Park to LA Conservancy

**December 24, 2010:** Read article in Star News regarding designation of historic neighborhood in Pasadena. Call Pasadena Heritage for advice. They request information regarding Craftsman to post on their Facebook page. Send pictures and info to Sue Mossman, also encourages me to contact Star News to ask them to do story on our efforts to save the house.

**December 27, 2010 (?)**:Owner has placed certain restrictions on broker.

**December 29, 2010:** Pictures of Craftsman posted by LA Conservancy and Pasadena Heritage on their Facebook pages. Numerous comments from readers.

**December 29, 2010:** Receive email that the National Trust for Historic Preservation will be contacting me about a story they want to do in their online magazine – Preservation Magazine - regarding our efforts to save the Craftsman.

**December 30, 2010:** Send information to editor from Preservation Magazine. . talk to her in afternoon. Article should appear next week.

**January 4, 2011:** Contacted Jeanette Williams of the Star News to see if she is interested in running our story. Contacted State Office of Historic Preservation for information on procedure for applying for designation as an Historic District.

**January 7:** Story on threatened California Craftsman appears in Star News

IN SUMMARY, THERE IS NOTHING EXTREME OR UNREASONABLE ABOUT OUR REQUEST. WE HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, THE LA CONSERVANCY AND PASADENA HERITAGE.

**Story in the Pasadena Star News (read the comments at the end of the story):**

[http://www.pasadenastarnews.com/ci\\_17088857?source=rss\\_viewed](http://www.pasadenastarnews.com/ci_17088857?source=rss_viewed)

**Popular Pasadena Blog Post**

<http://pasadenadailyphoto.blogspot.com/2011/01/home-shopping-to-rescue.html>

**From the Pasadena Heritage Facebook Page (also see attachment)**

<http://www.facebook.com/PasadenaHeritage?v=wall>

**Article from the National Trust for Historic Preservation**

<http://www.preservationnation.org/magazine/2011/story-of-the-day/threatened-los-angeles.html>

**A**